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TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Group of Experts on Multimodal Transport
Geneva, 9 March 1992
Agenda item 7

DRAFT REPORT OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT

**which met at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
from 9 to 13 March 1992
Rapporteur: Mr. E. Bubeer (Australia)**

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Letter of transmittal to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD

Sir,

We have the honour to submit herewith our report of the Group of Experts on Multimodal Transport containing the elements of a future programme of work for UNCTAD in the field of multimodal transport and containerization wherever there is a sea link, elaborated by us in accordance with the mandate given by the Committee on Shipping.

The experts, who attended in their personal capacities, held their session at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 9 to 13 March 1992. The Group unanimously elected Mr. J. P. Bendomir as Chairman and Mr. E. Bubeer as Vice-Chairman-*cum*-Rapporteur.

The session was attended by experts designated by the Governments of: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, China, Cuba, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Ghana, India, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Russian Federation and the United States of America.

Representative of the following states attended as observers: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ghana, India, Israel, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic Commission for Europe, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia were represented at the meeting.

The following specialized and related agency was represented at the meeting: World Bank.

The following intergovernmetal organizations were represented at the meeting: Board of the Cartagena Agreement, Ministerial Conference of West and Central African States on Maritime Transport, Organization of African Unity.

The following non-governemental organizations were represented at the meeting: General Category: International Chamber of Commerce, International Express Carriers Conference, International Organization for Standardization, Special Category: Council of European and Japanese National Shipowners Associations, European Shippers' Council, Federation of National Associations of Forwarding Agents of Latin America and the Caribbean, Institute of International Container Lessors, International Cargo Handling Co-ordination Associations, International Container Bureau, International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations.

Representatives of the following also attended as observers: Arab Maritime Transport Academy, Italian State Road Administration.

Several representatives of the transport industry were also invited to participate in the meeting as observers.

In accordance with our mandate, and on the basis of documents prepared by the secretariat, we examined recent developments in the field of multimodal transport and containerization as well as the main problems experienced by users and providers of these services. Bearing in mind in particular the needs of developing countries and countries with economics in transition to a market economy, we have prepared our proposals on a future programme of work on the assumption that it should reflect the dynamic nature of the industry, the emerging trends and the major policy issues in this field. It reflects a new spirit of partnership in the economic relations between countries, and the intention is to narrow the gap between the developed and other countries in this specific

field, in particular in relation to the establishment of integrated logistic services, electronic data interchange and the question of larger-than-current ISO standard containers.

We consider that multimodal transport service issues, because of their complexity and long-standing bearing on trade and development, should be entrusted for detailed analysis, examination, in-depth exploration and identification of possible areas of convergence to an appropriate forum established in line with the decisions of UNCTAD VIII. Taking into account that the subjects to be discussed are precisely defined, we therefore respectfully request you to consider the question of the establishment of such a forum.

We respectfully request you to distribute this report to all States members of UNCTAD and to submit it to the Trade and Development Board at its next session with a view to enabling the Board to decide on its future work programme in the field of multimodal transport, containerization and technological development.

Respectfully yours,